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Reims Reborn

Bernhard Ragner

Charles Owen Rice

Policy and Action

VOLUME XXVIII

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The COMMONWEAL

*A Weekly Review of Literature
the Arts and Public Affairs*

FOUNDED BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

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VOLUME XXVIII

July 29, 1938

NUMBER 14

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Week by Week

THE COUNTRY accepted with almost excessive serenity the Budget Department's new estimates. Operations of the federal government during the year ending June 30, 1939, are now expected to result in a financial deficit of \$3,984,-887,600, and the federal debt on that day is expected to stand at \$40,650,000,000. Adding the estimated non-federal public debt for June 30, 1939, the total public debt of the country will amount to about \$60,000,000,000, or \$460 for every individual. It is impossible to prove that any particular creditor class owns this debt, or, more particularly, that any section of the population is exempt from it. If there are taxes or if there is devaluation to handle it, the costs are shifted around in the general processes of our economy until the spendable income of practically everyone is reduced. This is a problem which has to be

met. Presumably, no one welcomes a perpetually unbalanced budget, but unfortunately, now in this country many wise words on federal finance deserve to make little impression because they are overloaded with a sinister implication: that the government should impossibly curtail social services and relief for the needy. There is still some healthy tax talk, and that is the most deliberate and rational way of meeting the problem, but present tax discussion is mostly about integrating federal and state taxing systems and about removing exemptions and credits, and too little about widening the tax base according to the La Follette scheme, or otherwise increasing the Treasury income and reducing preventable expense for "national defense" and loose general administration. Citizens must realize that what socially necessary jobs they refuse to take responsibility for themselves are going to be done in round-about, more dictatorial and more costly fashion by government, and that citizens are going to pay the costs anyway.

ONE OF the most convincing arguments against over-concentration of population in the great cities is that it costs more to live in them. A recent report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics on "How Urban Families Spend their Incomes" bears out this argument.

Food and shelter require substantially greater outlay in New York and then Chicago and then the other largest cities than they do in smaller cities. Some slighter adjustments can be made on other items of expense, but they are less essential items, and in some cases present no real advantage to the urban family. The best saving big city families make is in clothing. The main point, however, of the report here dealt with is the difference of proportional spending between income classes. In the cities, the lowest income families spend 40 percent of what they spend on food and 30 percent on housing. In the highest bracket, families spend 20 percent on food and 12 percent on housing. The restriction on the poor implicit in these figures should disturb the whole nation—to the point of action. Economic equalitarianism has certainly not yet been carried to extremes. A more equivocal comparison deals with the net surplus of income over expenses. "The income level at which the surpluses of families making net savings became large enough and frequent enough to outweigh the net deficits of families whose expenses exceeded their current incomes, was reached at \$1,250 in Portland, \$1,500 in Columbus and Omaha, \$1,750 in Chicago, Providence and Denver, \$2,000 in Atlanta, and at \$2,250 in New York. At all income levels, white families in New York City showed the smallest net surpluses." Should New York or Portland be the proud city?

THERE is a similarity of appeal in the recently announced program of the Middle Class Alliance, Inc., of Detroit, and the plan of the various chambers of commerce of New York "to resell the American system to America."

Middle
Class
Welfare

The chambers of commerce complain that "one of the main difficulties faced by business today is a lack of understanding on the part of the workers and consumers who constitute the general public of the importance to them of the development and maintenance of private business enterprise. . . . After surveying what private enterprise has done for America, we hold that it is an unalterable fact that the salvation of America must come from adherence to the proved American system." The first plank in the platform reads: "Business offers every man the opportunity to go as far as his ability and his industry will carry him." Would that this were so! The ranks of the unemployed would be fast depleted. No one can remain blind to the industrial efficiency wrought in America by large-scale enterprises. But then too there is the unfortunate by-product of "technological unemployment," with its attendant injury to general prosperity. You cannot have your cake and eat it. We are further told: "If we are to develop economic stability, it will come through the development of business and not by government mandate." But just as government mandate cannot create economic stability, neither can it be blamed for the economic "instability" which appeared in 1929, when chambers of commerce had little reason to berate government interference. All movements tending to protect and stimulate small private enterprise in this country are welcome when they do not do so by suppressing the rights of those below them. But the principal obstacle in the recent past has been not governmental meddling but voracious large-scale enterprise whose interests chambers of commerce traditionally have defended. Perhaps the chambers of commerce program maker has not realized the implication of his plan.

RECENTLY the New York *Times* commented editorially on the "growing indications of an acceptance of responsibility on the part of the men and signs of political maturity" in the maritime unions of both the Pacific and Atlantic coasts. Of course there

Labor

can be maturity only if unions are allowed to grow up. If their very existence is constantly threatened and their normal activities regularly thwarted by unenlightened or recalcitrant employers, then reason is no longer the order of the day and violence and excess both within the unions and in their external relations must be expected.

Maritime unions have existed for many years now and their growing maturity simply indicates the wisdom that comes with age. In contrast there are the recurrent troubles connected with the auto workers' unions, as witnessed by unauthorized strikes and internal dissensions. Many of these must be regarded as the follies of youth long denied its day. They can be expected to continue for some time and brute opposition will not hasten their normal process of elimination.

UP UNTIL six or seven years ago the United States continued to produce more cotton than the rest of the world combined.

A Plenty Some years before, danger signals
Exceeding had become visible to those who
Measure had the perspicuity to see them:
great acreages of cotton were

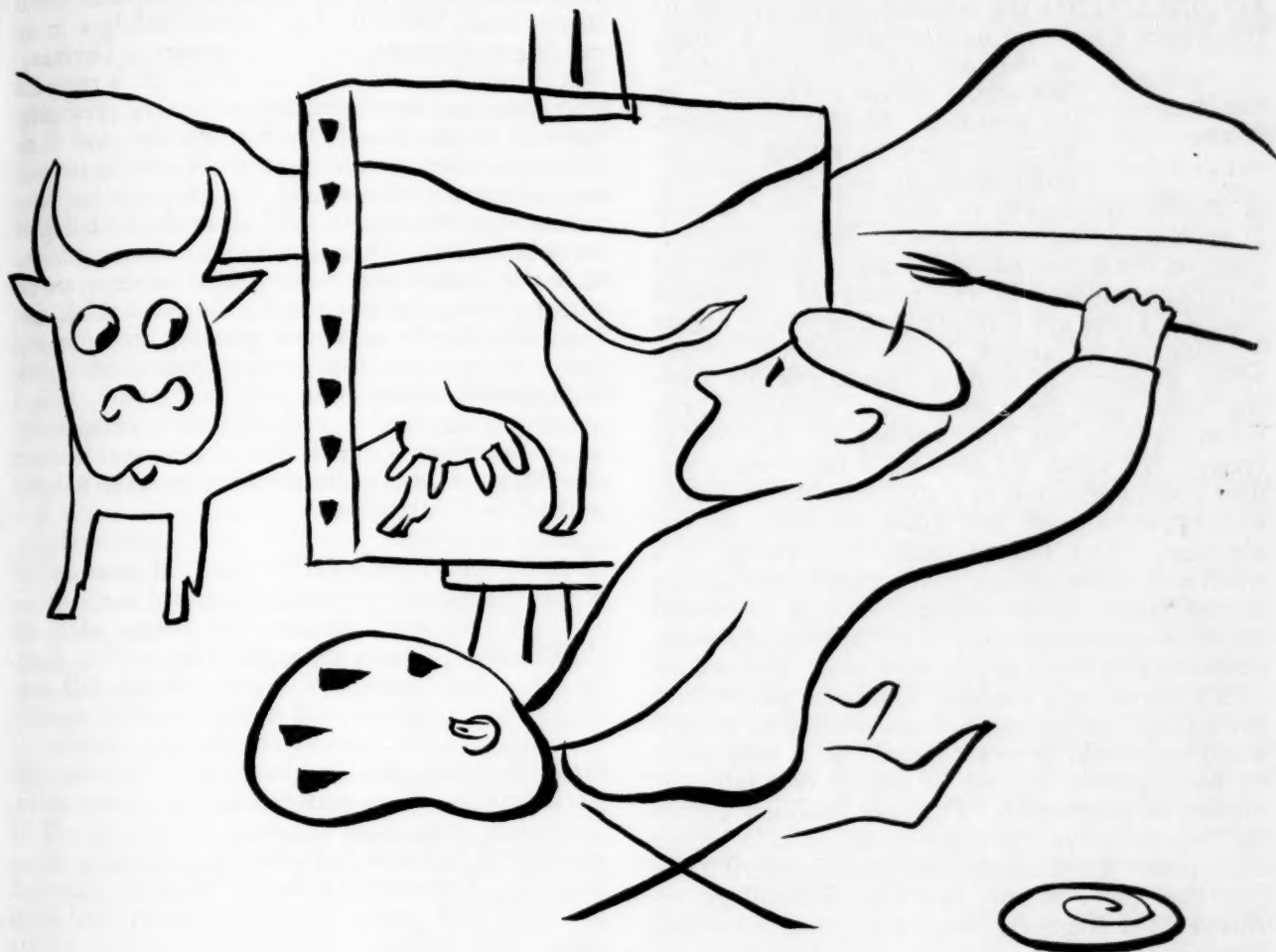
being developed in Africa and in South America. Then the crop control policies of the New Deal, designed to bolster the price of the staple, encouraged those who had been trying to build up new sources of supply in other lands. The resultant improvement in cotton prices brought with it so great an increase in cotton production elsewhere as virtually to lose for us control of production. Last year we supplied considerably less than half the world's raw cotton, whereas in the past our production has been 68 percent or better of the total. Here is what lies at the root of the troubles of Southern agriculture, and the period of adjustment away from cotton as a single money-crop to some other rural economy is bound to bring with it a terrible burden of poverty and distress and maladjustment for the South.

NO POLITICAL utterances can overcome this one basic fact, that cotton is no longer king. As was pointed out some weeks ago, wheat offers a somewhat similar problem to the farmers of the West, except that we ourselves can consume a far greater proportion of our wheat crop—about 70 percent of this year's crop as against 50 percent of this year's cotton—and the export problem is only acute in so far as it affects the immediate price level. Yet this problem is acute enough, since the world crop this year has proved to be excellent everywhere, contrary to earlier predictions. In fact this year's world production of wheat is probably the greatest in world history. Secretary Wallace has proposed to those nations which participated in the International Wheat Conference (every important producer except Argentina) at its recent London meeting that the principles of the ever-normal granary—principles that date back to the days of Joseph and Pharaoh—be extended to include world wheat production. The proposal has been recommended back to the individual participating nations; it is a hopeful suggestion—perhaps the only possible one in the present agricultural set-up.

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THE ARTS



The Realist

ON JULY 18 the results of the passage of the federal Housing Act became tangible, when the first dirt was turned for the foundation of a federal-municipal public housing project. Senator Wagner was there to help operate the steam shovel and to say that

Dirt
Turns

"this occasion signifies that public housing has come of age." The United States Housing Authority has \$800,000,000 to allot to cities which have their own housing authorities and which can furnish 10 percent of the cash to be expended. By July 15 the U.S.H.A. had earmarked \$504,669,000 for projects throughout the country. The second step is the arrangement of loan contracts with the municipal authorities, and the third is the actual payment in instalments as work is done. The public housing program is getting under way, and that undoubtedly has something to do with the better tone of business sentiment. Private building is still held up seriously by high costs. The Cleveland Trust Company *Business Bulletin* summarizes some interesting statistics on the cost of constructing a six-room

house, gathered from 92 cities by the Federal Home Loan Bank Board. The statistics omit charges for all incidental fixtures and only include the most basic costs of production. In January, 1936, the average cost of materials was \$3,214, and the average cost of labor was \$1,577, or a total of \$4,791. Both sorts of costs increased rapidly during the following spring, and by August, 1937, the materials had risen to \$3,609, and the labor to \$1,801. Direct labor costs had advanced over 14 percent and materials more than 12 percent. There have been slight decreases in material costs since then, but the total cost remains well over \$5,000. Colonel Ayres thinks "these new cost data reflect the greatest weakness of the construction industry, which is the almost complete lack of integration. It consists of great numbers of independent groups of artisans, laborers, architects, contractors, manufacturers, dealers and promoters, each seeking its own advantage." Private building has to be integrated around the directing home-owner, if a substantial number of homes are actually to be built.

IN SALUTING the summer, 1938, edition of the *Tower Postscript* of Manhattanville College,

Problem
Met

on the score of its leading article, "Principles versus Prejudices," by the president, Mother Dammann, we must begin by saying that the small space at our disposal here is wholly inadequate to deal with that article. It should, indeed, survive as a classic pronouncement on the duties and privileges of Catholic and American colleges in the matter of interracial justice. There are Catholic institutions of higher learning which accept Negro students; others which do not. In leading Manhattanville from the latter into the former class, Mother Dammann happily has the support of the college trustees, of about 80 percent of the present student body, registered in a student-supervised poll, and apparently of the great majority of the alumnae. This fact in itself, as applying to a small and select college, conducted by the Ladies of the Sacred Heart whose history is associated mainly with the education of the privileged classes, demonstrates more surely even than Manhattanville's increasingly enviable scholastic record that the college has recognized and moved to meet a situation which, however inevitably it may seem to have grown, cannot be called creditable or viewed as permanent. Properly qualified Catholic Negroes have the right to a Catholic higher education. To Catholic educators pondering the fact that there is only one Catholic college exclusively for Negroes, Mother Dammann's article is required reading.

HOWEVER much one may have disliked fascism in all its forms, its most rabid enemy has

The
Swarthy
Aryan

had to admit that the Italian variety is in many respects preferable to the German. One of the most important of these more sympathetic elements in Mussolini's "ideological front" was his party's attitude on the question of race. There has, of course, been anti-Semitic propaganda in Italy. What nation today is free of it? But the government officially has not previously manifested any authoritative anti-Semitic tendency; Italian Jews have been members in good standing of the Fascist party. An official statement of policy on February 16 last said: "The Italian government has never thought and is not now thinking of adopting political, economic or moral measures against Jews as such, except, of course, in the case of elements hostile to the Fascist régime." Now comes an exceedingly alarming report by an anonymous academic committee which has been studying the racial question under the Ministry of Popular Culture. It is true that the report is not expressly official. It is also true that the re-

port deals only with biological rather than moral distinctions; certainly the report indulges in no ranting comparable to that common in Germany. But it may be a straw in the wind. It is reported that Jews are now blocked in careers previously open to them. The Holy See at once, and in no uncertain terms, made clear the Catholic attitude on the matter; the official Italian press has been minimizing the report ever since the first day of its publication. There have also been suggestions that the report was intended to achieve an exterior political end—to make England think that the Rome-Berlin axis was growing stronger and hence to expedite the putting into effect of the Italo-British treaty. If this is the case, it is a shabby trick, but it reduces one's reasons for alarm at what seemed like a new and sinister development in a régime which at least was not as bad as it might be.

THE RESTORATION and dedication of Reims cathedral, described elsewhere in this issue,

A Moral
of
Reims

will gladden the hearts of multitudes throughout the world. Catholics will rejoice to see this venerable and sacred house of worship reconsecrated to the service of God. Builders and architects will welcome the preservation of a masterpiece of construction. Travelers who have relished its beauty will be comforted to know that that beauty again shines in glory. Frenchmen will glow to see a symbol of the faith and genius of France resurrected from ruin. All civilized men will be edified by the generosity of Mr. Rockefeller and the others who contributed in rebuilding the house of the Prince of Peace so recently destroyed by the marshals of war. The glories of Reims and its Gothic architecture have fired the imaginations of many. So much so that imitation and copying of various degrees are current down to our own time. Unfortunately, much of this has been slavish, unwarranted and ill-advised. It must be remembered that Reims cathedral itself was something of an innovation in its day, and had its architects restricted themselves to copying older forms it never would have come into being. Many of the features of Gothic simply were practical answers to problems created by terrain, material and function. It is noteworthy that in the work of construction, the aim has been practical rather than archeological. No attempt was made to use medieval devices and materials when available present-day techniques were more effective and economical. It might be well if this outlook became more prevalent in American construction. Then we would have buildings better adapted to contemporary and local needs, and would avoid the enormous expense and inconvenience involved in building archeological reproductions that are more museums than anything else.

Reims Reborn

By BERNHARD RAGNER

ON July 8, 9 and 10 medieval pageantry was resurrected when "Our Lady of Reims," the historic and majestic cathedral now completely "healed" of its war-time wounds, was "officially inaugurated" with picturesque and dramatic ritual. At the same time, Reims-the-martyr, triumphantly risen from its ruins and its shell-holes, celebrated its rebirth and its emergence as "the most American city in France," from the standpoint of hygiene, symmetry and beauty. Presiding over this national festival of thanksgiving, in addition to bishops and ministers of state, was "The Smiling Angel," that symbol of hope and fortitude which, for centuries, has bestowed its benediction upon the millions of pilgrims, artistic or religious, who have come to Reims to marvel and admire, meditate and pray.

"Although there still remains a great deal to be done, particularly in the way of additional bridges, squares and buildings, the cathedral city stands transformed, modernized and reborn," declared Mayor Paul Marchandau, moral architect and virtual builder of the new Reims, also Minister of Finances in the Daladier Cabinet.

"Not only has the cathedral, that masterpiece of Gothic art, been entirely restored and equipped even with a modern system of steam heating, but the city itself, the target of Germanic invasions across the centuries, has been rebuilt according to the most modern conceptions. Our population is larger than before the war; industry and commerce are thriving again. Twenty years of patient, heroic, constant endeavor, plus the generous aid of John D. Rockefeller, jr., plus the helpful advice and supervision of George B. Ford, the renowned American specialist in city-planning, have made this achievement possible. Reims is proud of its glorious history, but we do not live in the past tense; our hearts and minds are turned to the duties of today, and the destinies of tomorrow, as the civil and religious celebrations . . . in July will demonstrate."

For three days, Reims was in festival mood. On Friday, July 8, in the vast square before the flood-lighted cathedral, a medieval mystery entitled "Adam and Eve" and written in the twelfth century, was staged by a group of Sorbonne students called "Les Th  ophil  iens." This was followed by a pageant, requiring 300 actors, singers, musicians, etc., called "The Great Hours of Reims." It had been written by M. Henri Gh  on and included "The Baptism of Clovis" on Christmas day, A. D. 496. "The Coronation of Charles VII" in 1429, which was the crowning achievement of Saint Joan of Arc, and finally "The Passion of Reims," which portrayed its war-

time martyrdom. More than 10,000 persons, it is stated, were able to see, hear and applaud this spectacle, which was repeated on Saturday night.

On the day following, there was a military review, a banquet at the city hall for distinguished foreign guests, the dedication of the restored organ, and visits to the cathedral and its treasures of art and history. No fewer than fifty-two cardinals and bishops took part in the "official inauguration." Emmanuel Cardinal Suhard presided; the program comprised a pontifical high Mass and a procession of relics about the cathedral. Among these relics were the sword of Charlemagne, a prayer-book of the sixth century, an ivory comb which once belonged to Saint Bernard, reliquaries, candlesticks and holy vessels, and finally several score of coronation ornaments which played a r  le in the ceremonies staged when the various kings of France were crowned in Reims.

In the course of the day, the British delegation presented to Cardinal Suhard an authentic copy of the standard which Joan of Arc carried at the coronation of Charles VII. Research in moldy documents, dating back to Joan's day, permitted an exact reproduction of this standard to be made. We know that Joan was in Reims from July 16 to 21, 1429; during this time she met her father (whose hotel bill, by the way, was paid by the municipal authorities), her younger brother Pierre and Durand Lassois, her cousin. The cathedral, at the time, did not yet possess its two magnificent towers. Joan was so pleased with her reception that, after her departure, she sent three letters of thanks addressed to the "good and loyal citizens of Reims." This standard is the gift of a group of Britons who possibly are thus trying to atone, at least in part, for what Kipling called "that cruel, undying sin we shared in Rouen market-place." Lord Hewart, chief justice of England, led the British delegation to Reims.

In some respects, Reims may with justice claim the title of "American city." Not only did Mr. Rockefeller contribute generously to the restoration of the cathedral, there is also an American Memorial Hospital which specializes in children's diseases. There is a Rue Rockefeller; also an Avenue Myron T. Herrick, and a Carnegie Library with a statue of the donor standing before it. Finally, as already indicated, an American expert in city-planning helped to rebuild the new Reims; in consequence, there is an American atmosphere, particularly in the business section. "American" is a popular adjective in Reims, whether it refers to a way of preparing champagne, philanthropy, or business methods.

And yet, despite this admixture of Americanism, Reims is distinctly and profoundly French.

Because of its history, whether secular or religious, it has become a symbol to Frenchmen, an emblem of past glory and of future hope. The cathedral, more than any other, not even excepting Notre Dame de Paris, possesses national significance. Within it, for more than a millenium, has been enshrined not only the idea of religious unity, but also the growing concept of unity that is national. It was at Reims that twenty-five kings of France were crowned, and the statue of each is included in the royal gallery of the cathedral.

Thousands of Frenchmen, in 1938, echoed the faith and the aspiration of René Armand when he wrote: "Edified by an entire people in the centuries of faith and mysticism, the cathedral raised above the roofs of the city, above the countryside, above the horizon, the cry of hope of unhappy humanity. It was the great reality which, soaring over the miseries of the epoch, enabled man to support trials with patience and to believe in the future. Daughter of a mystical love, Our Lady of Reims assumed the task of teaching and spreading love, of gathering about herself the material and moral life of the town. Thus, before her noble portal was born the synthetic idea of the French motherland."

For more than thirteen centuries, this cathedral has had a dramatic career. As far back as A.D. 496, Clovis, King of the Franks, was crowned here, not in the present cathedral of course, but in a chapel which stood on the site. The last monarch to be anointed in this historic edifice was Charles X in 1824. Best known to Americans, however, was Charles VII, who here received the royal crown, thanks to the heroism of a peasant maid by the name of Joan of Arc. Quite rightly, her statue stands before the cathedral, although it had to be removed, temporarily, for the inauguration festivals.

It is indeed "fit for a king," this cathedral. In no other Gothic structure, except perhaps Chartres, is to be found so sharply marked the spirit of the Middle Ages. The interior is impressive, with massive pillars, side aisles, and stained-glass windows of great beauty. Although it took more than two centuries to build, the original plan of the first architect, Jean d'Orbais, has been faithfully adhered to, so that the cathedral has a unity which many others lack. The total length is 488 feet; the total width, 200 feet; while the two famous towers which flank the entrance are 265 feet high. Hundreds of statues adorn the church, both within and without, and some of them are so accurate in detail that they provide exact information as to the wearing apparel of the time of the Crusades.

The corner-stone of the present cathedral was laid by Archbishop Alberic de Humbert on May 6, 1211. Since that day, it has been growing, is

still growing. However, for obscure and perplexing reasons, it was never consecrated to divine service until last year. At that time, the ceremonies were exclusively religious, and it was announced the "official inauguration," national and international, ecclesiastical and civil in character, would be held this coming July.

To the present generation, Reims Cathedral is famous primarily because of its mutilation during the World War. From 1914 to 1918, it was the symbol of French sacrifice and heroism. From August 1, 1914, to March 21, 1918 (the date when Reims was evacuated by the civilian population), it was struck by no fewer than 159 shells. But the shelling continued, and from June 25 to September 17, 1918, exactly 123 additional shells hit the structure, making a total of 282 direct hits. Indeed, during the work of restoration, a 380 mm. shell, which had not exploded, was found embedded in the floor.

After the war, M. Henri Deneux was appointed architect-in-chief but progress was slow. Tons of debris had to be removed. A canvas roofing was placed over the building, and on Christmas day, 1919, part of the nave was restored to religious worship. Slowly, methodically, the priceless stained-glass windows were put back in place, under the direction of M. Jacques Simon. Then, more than a decade ago, Mr. Rockefeller made his generous offer, and work was speeded up; in 1936, he visited the cathedral and expressed approval of the restoration effected thanks to his liberality. At the time, Reims made him an honorary citizen and named one of its thoroughfares, near the cathedral, after him. Within one of the towers are the "Rockefeller Chimes," the melodies of which echo across the fertile vineyards of the Champagne country every evening.

The cathedral is accustomed to disaster, to war, to fires, also to neglect. During the French Revolution, it was profaned, and was only saved by being transformed into a Temple of Reason. Napoleon, both as consul and emperor, was unfriendly to the ancient structure; too many monarchist memories, some of them inspiring, lingered about it; in consequence, it was "demoted" and became a simple parish church. Logically enough, it was restored to its ancient rank when Napoleon took up residence in St. Helena. As an Anglo-Saxon writer has said, "While France remains, Reims cathedral can never be destroyed. It may be wrecked, mutilated, pitifully spoiled, but it will always rise again. For Reims is one of those great Gothic shrines which have their being in the very soul of France."

It was with this conviction and this faith that "the cradle of French unity" was reconsecrated to its century-old mission this July.

Newspaper Editors Are Sissies

By R. E. WOLSELEY

"HE CAME up to me, on the northern side of the street—said something which I could not hear distinctly, then pushed me down the stone steps . . . and commenced fighting with a species of brutal and demoniac desperation characteristic of a fury."

Is this Mr. Hearst speaking of an attack made upon him by J. David Stern? Roy Howard complaining of being set upon by Frank Gannett? Paul Block's description of an encounter with Mike Gold?

No such thing. It is James Gordon Bennett sr.'s explanation of a fight he had one hundred years ago with Colonel James Watson Webb, editor of the *New York Courier and Enquirer*.

These could not be modern newspaper editors, for, alas, those of the 1938 brand are sissies. Not because they do not engage in blood-stirring fist-cuffs, for that is a credit to their intelligence, but because they are unwilling even to razz each other in their editorial columns.

Who ever hears any more of newspapers printing fake stories for the sake of catching a copying rival in the act? Who ever reads an editorial that says of another editor, as some of Park Benjamin's did in 1840, that he is an "obscene vagabond, a loathsome and leprous slanderer and libeler," "a venomous reptile," and "a polluted wretch"? These gentle words appeared, with dozens little more tempered, in Benjamin's *New York Signal*.

Now and then, of course, there will be a vicious feud, like the one on the Pacific coast last year which resulted in a murder. But this was so unusual that it became a big national story. In the ordinary run of affairs the public thinks, with reason, that editors get along with each other like other members of the Rotary Club, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Outdoor Country Club. This is true, despite a few newspaper novels, plays and movies that pretend there are lifelong animosities between sets of editors and publishers everywhere.

This movie stuff is all hooey, of course. The modern editor or publisher is a cold, bloodless being. He cares so little about his pet policies that he won't quarrel with the town demagogue or ward leaders about them, much less rival editors. Just when Henry J. Raymond, founder of the *New York Times*, would roll up his sleeves to write a longhand reply to an editorial in the *New York Tribune* chiding his paper for one thing or another, the modern editor will accept an invitation to play golf with the other Kiwanians, hang

up the mouthpiece of his dictaphone or tell his secretary to go home for the afternoon, and forget all about his executive order to the managing editor to have a reporter prepare and leave on his desk another story on the menace of the Reds.

If the modern editor wanted to, he could find many good excuses to meet a rival on the esplanade every week or so and have it out. Fortunately, society is past the barbarism of duelling. It must be admitted that a good imitation of the Louis-Schmeling set-to by two bespatted editors would not be conclusive and might not be even amusing. But the least that might be expected is a lively exchange of editorial blows. But no, there is only silence.

In Chicago, for example, there might be some swell mix-ups between the two colonels, McCormick of the *Tribune* and Knox of the *Daily News*. Even better might be the clashes between whoever is the current editor of Mr. Hearst's *Herald Examiner* and the *Tribune's* colonel. Possibly best of all might be S. E. Thomason or Dick Finnegan of the *Times* against the field, including the *Journal of Commerce* and the *Daily Drovers' Journal*.

The *Trib* might have picked a fight with the *Times* for the latter's exposé of its election story about all the discarded Roosevelt buttons after a rally for F.D.R. or for showing up its attempt to make the Social Security Act's provisions and requirements seem little better than those in connection with work on a Georgia chain gang. The *News* could have raised Cain when the *Times*, in violation of copyright, printed Westbrook Pegler's crack at the G.O.P. which the *News* purposely omitted one night.

But in that same Chicago, known for its hard-boiled journalism (remember Hildy Johnson in "The Front Page"?) the *Herald Examiner* can hide Robert Irwin, the New York artist's model's murderer, for a day and the other papers don't even bother to do anything about it or even to point out that the trick doesn't harmonize so well with all this cry about freedom of the press. When the *Tribune* went so far as to blame an "L" wreck on the lack of legislation dealing with daylight and standard time, no paper took this chance to poke fun at so ridiculous an attempt to apply a policy.

Not so those he-men of a century ago. Henry Lynch wrote in the *New York Herald* in 1836 that Colonel Webb was being paid for rigging the stock market. The elder Bennett made the most of the story in an editorial, with the consequence that Webb, meeting him in Wall Street,

knocked him down, and thrashed him with a cane. Bennett took an awful beating good-naturedly, at least so far as his comment on it goes, for he wrote in the *Herald* that his skull had been opened by the blows, but that: "The fellow, no doubt, wanted to let out the never-failing supply of good humor and wit, which has created such a reputation for the *Herald*, and appropriate the contents to supply the emptiness of his own thick skull."

The colonel and Bennett met in combat again that year, and Bennett came off with few injuries this time. He wrote of Webb and all other adversaries: "Brute force, barbarian comment, and miserable trick and juggle are the only weapons they employ. The *Herald* is producing, and will produce, as complete a revolution in the intellectual habit of daily life as steam-power is doing in the material." Bennett also was horsewhipped, but not over journalistic matters so much as for using his columns to reflect on the morals of certain New York business firms.

Benjamin H. Day, founder of the New York *Sun* and probably forgotten today except (erroneously) as the source of the Ben Day engraving process, carried on many a quarrel with his fellow publishers. Once the *Sun* chided the editor of a new contemporary by publishing this: "The *Evening Star* of yesterday comes out in favor of the French, lottery, gambling, and phrenology for ladies. Is the man crazy?" The man was Mordecai M. Noah, editor, playwright and social crusader. Such comment on new papers was a common occurrence in the 1830's.

Not quite so far back in history, just beyond the middle of the past century, when papers had no legitimate reason for lambasting a rival they invented both reason and rival. Wells Drury, who was reporter and editor on numerous papers on the Comstock Lode in Nevada, tells in his autobiography the story of the mythical Waubuska Mangler. The Carson *Appeal* of the same state was wont to reprint and answer savage editorials from the *Mangler*, which had existence only in the minds of the *Appeal's* editors. Drury wrote that many residents of Nevada still think there was such a paper as the *Mangler* because the hoax between it and its contemporaries was continued many years.

Thus far we have seen evidence of personal bravery or physical combat between the editors of yore. Some were interested only in personal publicity or foolish editorial counter-attacks. Others could not be content without defying tyranny or furthering the cause of civil liberty.

But today we are not likely to see our editors depriving themselves of very much or becoming martyrs for larger causes. They have—and it is to their credit—abandoned physical strife in the public square.

The modern editor cannot be bothered emulat-

ing Abijah and Thomas Adams, of the Boston *Independent Chronicle*, who in 1799 defied the vicious Sedition Law and were arrested for their pains. Nor imitating John D. Burk, editor of the New York *Time-Piece*; Benjamin Franklin Bache and William Duane, successive editors of *Aurora*, who were arrested and in one instance nearly deported about that period for their spurning of the seditious libel laws. The imprisonment suffered by James Franklin, editor of the *New-England Courant*, or by John Peter Zenger, publisher of the New York *Weekly Journal*, seems to set no example stretching from 1735 to 1938.

As for the martyrdom of Elijah Lovejoy: that makes the timidity of the editor of today all the more sharp. Lovejoy, an opponent of slavery, was editor of the *Observer* of Alton, Illinois. He was shot for his views in 1837.

Even so relatively safe a career of crusading as that of Colonel William Rockhill Nelson, who remade Kansas City with campaigns conducted through the Kansas City *Star*, no longer seems to move our editors to deeds for the public weal.

From magazines and news-reels comes more of the spirit of truth-seeking than from the newspapers, for whom the guarantee of freedom of the press was set up and defended with the flesh years ago. The picture magazines go to bat against police third-degree methods, against suppression of speech, and against slum conditions in the big cities. The news-reels tell the story of Nazi terrorism and inroads upon American democracy and of Chicago police brutality.

Today a thousand causes go unpublicized in the majority of the American newspapers. Whatever physical improvements are obtained for a city through its press—a new park, a new playground, a street sign or warning here or there—are brought into being after a long campaign which the paper uses very often to promote its own welfare. Into almost every city it is possible to go with a flashlight and find corruption—political, educational or business—about which the newspaper says nothing, which, in fact, it denies it has any business to expose.

Of course there are the 100 Neediest Cases and other good deeds of a minor nature. But what use to boast of 100 when 100,000 is just a starter on the real situation? How about a few really big drives against munitions makers who profit from the deaths of Japanese, Chinese and several kinds of Spaniards? Or a campaign against lynch law? Against waste of natural resources by private business as well as by government? Against Frank Hague's fascism? Against municipal corruption in dozens of cities?

How account for modern editors being such milk-sops?

With several reasons. Publishing a paper, to begin with, has become an industry, something like

making munitions, manufacturing automobiles, or running a chain of grocery stores. Newspaper fends and the sight of one editor flogging another are disliked, not because they are barbarian and unintelligent when they become physically personal, but because they would hurt business. No one would expect Henry Ford to walk into Alfred Sloane's office and knock his block off. It may be okay for Sinclair Lewis to punch Theodore Dreiser or for Ernest Hemingway to floor Max Eastman, but after all they are only authors. They are expected to be temperamental.

Big businessmen never must come nearer to a dispute than to argue over the short seventh at golf or to rise alternately to speak at the trade's annual convention. If Sam Goldwyn should take a poke at Darryl Zanuck out in Hollywood, it would be bad publicity for the movie industry. The press agents for their firms wouldn't allow it. It is undesirable, of course, because it is a stupid way to settle a dispute, but that is not the reason for the restraint.

Likewise for Tom Wallace of the *Louisville Times* to have some things out with Dr. John Finley of the *New York Times* might put the American press in the same class with politics, labor unions and prize fighting. It would never do to come to grips with matters like that.

Not only would a return to the good old crusading days of Bache, Lovejoy, Bennett, Dana, Zenger, Greeley, Webb, the Adamses and Day not pay, but it would not be respectable. And respectability is a high ideal among newspaper editors these days. No longer are they ruffians who edit the copy themselves and throw irate subscribers down the stairs. They now have mahogany desks to sit at in walnut-walled rooms equipped with all sorts of devices to make work easy. They are surrounded by many assistants. They take regular vacations; they have yachts; they are leaders of the church and set the pace for social functions.

The personal journalist of seventy-five or one hundred years ago was the man of vigor in the newspaper world. Today the personal journalist is the columnist, not the editor. He is the nearest to a survival of the fighting journalist. The men and women who can give and take it now are Heywood Broun, Dorothy Thompson, Walter Lippmann, Westbrook Pegler, Boake Carter and Herbert Agar, among dozens of others not quite so familiar. Yet even they, with all their freedom (Howard Vincent O'Brien's column on Colonel Knox, wherein he declared his boss would be a failure as president, is an example), seem to be squeamish about commenting on each other or on each other's papers. Broun did it not long ago and was quoted widely because it was such an unheard-of procedure. This editorial silence is calculated to deprive the competitor of publicity.

The most potent reason for the modern newspaper's weakness may be the fear of legal entanglements. Libel suits are expensive affairs and it costs papers a lot to win or lose them. So foggy is the law of libel that editors cut out material which is risky rather than fight for a point and possibly win it by taking a chance. Most editors have trouble deciding whether some statements or news phrases are libelous. A few hire lawyers to go over all proofs but it is easier and cheaper simply to knock the suspected sentence or words out of the text.

What chance, then, has a columnist to call the guy who writes a similar daily piece "an ill-looking, squinting man," as one editor labeled another a century ago?

No, the day of the fighting editor is gone. Few editors fight in any sense of the word. Physical clashes are and should be no more; vocal conflict is rare, written wrangling is occasional and indulged in only at election time (and who still takes election fights seriously?).

Not many editors are willing to fight in any way for causes more daring than those which were progressive at the time of the American revolution.

The real fighting spirit today is seen in the legislative chambers, the union meeting halls, on picket lines, at teachers' conventions, and during the church conferences of the country. It may not be bloody; it should not be bloody. But at least it is earnest and forward-looking.

The editors, sad to say, can best be described by a good old word devised about Ambrose Phillips—namby-pamby.

New Englander

If in my verse you hear a stony note
Or now and then the barb of driven steel,
Remember the past: the stopped and song-choked throat
That might not utter what it still must feel.
Remember men whose faces, harsh with toil,
Still lit blue eyes' bright lanterns at a smile;
Remember the shoulders whose strength built in the soil
Stone fences, logs hand-hewn to shape a stile.

And think too of the women at the loom,
The firelight crimson on the sanded floor:
There was a silence sometimes in that room
That strove to speak, stammered, and was no more.
Oh, I can see them dark beyond my shoulder
When I frame in a phrase the fields they plowed:
I can see the blade, circling the stubborn boulder,
Hear metal shrieking on stone, protesting, loud.
So how shall I write, save of those stormy hills,
Long nights, rich days and dreams that all went past:
How shall I write, with spring at my window-sills
And the shape of another over my paper cast. . . .

ELEANOR ALLETTA CHAFFEE.

Policy and Action

By CHARLES OWEN RICE

NEARLY a year ago in press dispatches, mostly from Pittsburgh, a word combination, that startled many a reader, began to circulate. A group with the weird title Catholic Radical Alliance had been formed in that grimy town and was saying and doing things which attracted public notice.

Why this combination, Catholic and Radical? What the connection? What the purpose? Well, there was a definite purpose and a definite connection. The group, composed of priests and laity, was formed to translate the social encyclicals into action as best it could. It wanted to make the dynamic, effective social teaching of the Church known and heeded. Acting in accordance with Christian prudence and charity, it frankly intended to dramatize and drive home its points by every proper and available means.

The word radical is a perfectly respectable and decent one. Like many another it has been "given a bad name." It has been taken over by, and handed over to, those who want to change our social and economic fabric in a harmful, unchristian and very sanguinary fashion. But it still means nothing worse than something that goes to the roots.

In the minds of many, Catholic and non-Catholic, lurks the thought that the Catholic Church is primarily a conservative, nay reactionary, force, while, as a matter of fact, she is dynamic, crusading and radical. Hence the use of "Catholic Radical" Alliance, both to shock and to inform. Who will deny that people in this time of crisis need to be shocked and informed and awakened to a realization of the true nature of things?

Communists and Leftists of all shades have been making a deal of noise. Condemn them, as we may, for their errors, it were foolish to deny that, in the minds of very many, they stand out as friends of the worker and the poor. Their zeal is magnificent. Their social message, their suggested cures for the world's malaise, abominable. But we know of them and their zeal and their message; while, who knows of the Catholic cure? Who knows that there is such a cure? Who knows, outside of some relatively learned men, that the evils of our present system have had their most incisive and complete condemnation in the encyclicals of Pius and Leo; that the Church is the friend of the worker and the poor; that she calls upon her sons to lift the burdens from the shoulders of the down-trodden; that she has definite, practical recommendations for the healing of our sick society?

Learned sermons, well-planned conferences, flowery discourses do not tell the average worker of his powerful and eager friend nor of her heartening message. Study clubs, round tables, debates, etc., do some good, but, by themselves, they are hardly very useful.

Something different was needed. Something very like what the clear-eyed zealots under Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin were doing. That's why the Catholic Radical Alliance was formed. It was formed to do things and also to dramatize and exemplify the wisdom, practicality, activity and charity of the Catholic Church.

We feed, shelter and clothe the poor, counsel and aid the workers, picketing with them, feeding them, addressing them, defending them from attack. We do this, primarily, because it is right and good and, secondarily, that all men may know the Catholic stand. For this reason we do not hide our light under a bushel. In so far as they are available, we use the legitimate avenues of publicity: newspaper, magazine, radio. When we do, or are going to do, anything, we tell the papers, and, if we can, we have photographers on the job.

Our stand on labor is the one that has aroused the most interest. We help every legitimate union that needs us and that we are able to help. However, although our first activity was for an A.F.L. union, our C.I.O. advocacy has attracted the most attention, favorable and unfavorable, probably because the C.I.O. itself has been attracting a great deal of attention.

Very shortly after the Catholic Radical Alliance was formed last spring, Pittsburgh was stirred by an A.F.L. strike at a monster food products factory, whose name, by the way, is internationally known. The strike was proceeding according to schedule. The company bought page ads in every daily, accused the union heads of being Communists, claimed that a few agitators were responsible for the trouble, that its employees were eminently satisfied but that outsiders were stirring some of them up. A company union, too, was in the field and it was extolled as a simon-pure, legitimate, independent organization.

We lined up the facts in the case, got in touch with the strike committee, heard their side of the story and the next day two priests and four of the laity were down on the picket line. Signs were carried proclaiming the justice of the strikers' cause and our support of them. When the strike ended in an agreement for an election,

priests from the C.R.A. addressed a pre-election mass meeting. During negotiations, later on, one of us sat in on some of the conferences. Subsequently at an N.L.R.B. trial he testified in the union's behalf.

What did all this mean? It meant that a Catholic group had taken action on behalf of the workers, had helped them materially, had won their gratitude and had effectively spiked Communist reports that the Church was for the rich and against the poor.

In this particular case we know definitely that our action helped the legitimate union materially, especially in the election, for our stand nullified carloads of company propaganda. We know also that Communist elements nibbling at the workers, especially their leaders, were given a set-back.

Our attitude and general line of attack has been the same in other cases. Of course, every strike situation is different, every union is different and changes in technique are required. But our main design of practical action remains unchanged. In one case, feeding of the strikers may be the best help we can give. In another, raising of morale by speaking to the workers may be best. In still another an approach to the management may be of the most service. But in each case we follow the lines of action, within our power, which seem most effective.

We do not confine our work merely to those occasions when the workers are striking or preparing to strike, but we speak to them and move among them on every occasion that offers.

We do all this because, primarily, it is the Christian thing to do. American workmen, in the mass, are in the toils of an unjust wage slavery. They lack freedom and security. Under the present system a good labor union is the only thing that can give them even a modicum of freedom and security. In their struggle to establish labor unions, to defend their rights and insure justice they need and deserve the support and guidance of all decent elements in the community. Especially, do they need and merit the aid of religious groups and individuals.

At the time of a strike or even of a union drive for membership, the worker is subjected to terrific pressure from many sides. He is threatened, the union is maligned, sudden benefactions from the management affect his judgment, the newspapers print partizan stories, law-enforcement agencies are often on the side of the boss. The worker knows not whom to believe, whom to trust.

At such a time, it seems to me that it is a real work of charity for a disinterested party calmly to tell the worker what his rights are, to tell him just where a labor union stands on the moral scale. It is good for the perplexed and embattled worker to know that he has the right to organize, to know that his union is not communistic, and

to know that he has the right, nay the duty, to strive for a just wage and decent working conditions because that helps not only himself but the common good.

Are we not following the Pope's counsel, command rather, when we "go to the workers," giving them leadership, gaining their confidence? Strike or no strike, we seize every opportunity we get to address the workers and impress upon them that the injustice, which they groan under and strive against, is unchristian and condemned by the Church. We drive it home that to assert themselves, they need not be Communists, they need be but Christians. This helps the worker by stiffening his morale and enlightening his intellect, and also by inoculating him against Communism.

Our positive action in helping the workers gives us many chances to serve the Church in other ways. For instance, it causes the workers to listen to us when we warn against dangerous organizations, theories and lines of action. We prevented many a local from sending delegates to the American League against War and Fascism's national convention held in Pittsburgh last fall. We picketed the convention and attacked it in the public press. We had proved ourselves friends of the worker, and he listened to us. When a prominent Pittsburgh labor leader—A.F.L. be it noted—foolishly gave public proclamation of his Communism, we were able to call on his local to remove him from office without the risk of being called Fascists or tools of the bosses. When a Communist argues against us he cannot accuse us of being "do-nothing" theorists, and he is lost for rebuttal on account of this.

The labor angle is just one facet of our program. In addition, there is our House of Hospitality, where 350 are fed daily, our Farming Commune, our education and propaganda activities. Of that side of our work maybe THE COMMONWEAL will let us speak more later.

Someone may wonder how one gets a thing like the C.R.A. started. It's simple. You get a group of kindred spirits together. Discuss social issues for a time. Wait until a strike bobs up in your vicinity. Investigate the issues, giving the worker the benefit of the doubt. Make a statement in the workers' favor, if they be in the right, as they generally are. Go down to the picket line and carry signs favoring them. Try to get your pictures taken down there, being sure to have a few pretty girls in the foreground so that the picture will stand a good chance of being printed. Brazenly make statements on everything germane to your field. The true Catholic doctrine is such dynamite that statements of this kind are always newsworthy. Thicken your hide against assaults from the Right and Left. Let them beef their heads off, you will be doing right and God will bless you.

Confessions

By NATHALIE TROUBETSKOY

IN THE spring after my seventh birthday, structural alterations in our country house in the Ukraine caused us to accept the hospitality of my Aunt Catherine, our nearest neighbor. Tcharnishovka was some forty miles from our home, across boundless steppes, over rough and flooded roads, and even a small desert, where the horses had to be unharnessed from the family barouche, and six pairs of oxen attached instead. The sands were of the color of wheaten bread and were ever shifting, and through and over the treacherous billows our carriage rocked, and sank, and rose like an ungainly ship, the while the oxen plodded on, horned heads low, tails swishing.

The journey had its pleasures. There was the changing of our foursome of hot thoroughbred greys for the four cool and sturdy blacks from my aunt's at a half-way house. This was a long, low mud hut, thatched and whitewashed, with the traditional cherry orchard in full bloom and dripping petals over the yellow straw of the roof and the oily-black, newly-turned earth of the garden. It was just beyond the desert and at the end of our domain, and here one of our bailiffs lived, some thirty-five miles away from civilization or our control, in happiness, honesty and cleanliness, with a buxom, capable wife and many flaxen-haired babies. Euphin was the third generation of desert-keepers and his luxuriant hair and curly beard were of the same color of the sands.

The coachman and grooms and herdsmen stretched uneasy legs, and spat, and rubbed down steaming horses and oxen. Farm lads cleared the carriage of its thick coating of sand. Euphin's elder girls ran to and fro with buckets of water and jugs of milk. While the blacks were being harnessed tea was served. We had ours on the porch, out of cups and with milk. Euphin entertained both the old coachmen in the kitchen, with tea out of tall glasses. The grooms and ox-leaders had theirs under the cherry trees, out of saucers, with slowly sucked lumps of sugar.

The house at Tcharnishovka was set in a hollow and reached through the farm; and the usual round flower-garden in front was surrounded by low granaries and outhouses. It was rather squat and very white.

The entire household was waiting for us on the broad steps. Aunt Catherine was very tall and stately, a Greek by birth, with lovely velvety eyes, a peach-tinted skin and a deep husky voice. Uncle was tall and silent. My cousins were a few years older than I and rather patronizing.

Our late arrival meant a belated bedtime, and I was carried off to the schoolroom with customary patronage, and yet some mysterious pur-

posefulness. The boys were not even allowed to enter. The large lamp was already shedding its yellow light on the long table, strewn with books and papers. The girls pushed some toys at me, telling me to be quiet as they were busy, and with pink tongues between pearly teeth, and hands clutching tousled curls, they went on scribbling on long strips of paper.

"Show," said I, overcome with curiosity.

"It's not for little children," sighed Vera.

"It's sins, lots of them," Mara joined in blithely.

"I'm seven, seven now," I shouted.

"Dear me," screamed the twins' chorus. "So she is. Well, here's some paper. Get on with it."

But it was more easily said than done. To be sure, I had been to my first confession just after my birthday, but, though I was duly prepared by days of fasting and church visiting, and mother's explanations, the ordeal was not an ordeal at all, for the big, kindly Bishop put a soft hand on my head and just asked if I had been naughty and if I was sorry and would try to be good. And his purple robes smelt of cedar-wood and incense and his white hand, as I kissed it, of the same lovely soap as mother's, and the big church was dimly candle-lit, and the choir sang soothingly.

This was different. I had to compete with bigger children, whose sins filled whole sheets of paper. I tried in vain, feeling more certain of my iniquity and more unable to define it as time passed. The twins rescued me from a deluge of tears with a brilliant suggestion. Vera would add up our three lists and divide them into three parts. My tears were stanchd; my pride swelled at this equality with my seniors by two years. The twins smiled a trifle sadly. They had worked so hard that day, remembering the slightest misdeed.

Next day went quickly between garden, animals, meals and church. All three of us were saddened, talking decorously in hoarse whispers. At dusk we went to every member of the household, asking their pardon on bended knees—from fat cook in her kitchen to shy and awkward uncle in his smoke-laden study; from mother's supercilious maid to the burly old butler. The hardest task was humbling ourselves to the boys; the easiest to Aunt Catherine, to whom we all gladly and perpetually knelt.

Then the carriages were announced, and we drove through the darkening village to the little white church. The small choir sang simply; the young priest intoned diffidently; it was all very different from the glorious, glittering city cathedral, or our immense, beautiful family church at home, but I clutched my long list in hot hands and thanked my cousins with all my heart, promising with fervor never to commit again any of the fascinating sins lent to me by my elders and betters.

Communications

PLAINT OF A CATHOLIC MOTHER

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: I feel the anonymous mother in your July 15 issue is thinking too much of the world's opinion while trying to follow the dictates of her own desires (though I grant this is hard to avoid).

I have been married eleven years and so far have five children. Some neighbors consider us odd and strange but quietly seem envious of our children, individually for such charms as they may have and collectively for the companionship they find among themselves and for the implied force of our family strength in the years to come.

Two of my best friends, not living near me, have seven and eight children respectively, and I am quite envious of them, and two near-by friends each have five.

Our nearest neighbor has one child and can have no more, which contrast is brought home to us constantly by the loneliness of the child and the restlessness of the parents as well as by their combined desire to come over to our house where something is always happening. . . .

Not far from us live a couple with two children, an intelligent couple, and very "up and modern," with reasonable income and a good future. This mother concluded that she was going to have an ordered family of four, with at least six years between the groups of two, which was quite fitting to her as she has been the leading officer in her local Birth Control Group.

It was rather pathetic to me to find, because I like this couple, that the mother discovered when she wanted some more children that she couldn't have them and this continuing anxiety and worry finally brought her to a nervous breakdown.

I still believe that children are lent to us for an indefinite time to enable us to train them to know and to love and to serve God, and that the happiness granted to us in married life, the greatest happiness available to man, is made superlative to compensate for the trials and worries and deprivations which come in raising any large family.

It is never "convenient" to have children and most of those whom I know who have restricted families so as not to have their social engagements hindered have ended up in early divorce or in a sanatorium.

A family can be very sufficient unto itself, and difficulties are merely being invited if you are influenced by the "Jones Family" as to what is the proper social gesture for your immediate set.

A CONSTANT READER.

Wilton, Conn.

TO the Editors: The "Plaint of a Catholic Mother" has aroused in at least one of your readers a fervent hope that you intend to present in your columns the position of that group of Catholic women who, faced with the necessity for family limitation, meet their problem in full conformity with the law of the church, as promulgated by our Holy Father himself.

In a slightly self-righteous fashion, "Anonymous" looks askance at her co-religionists whose families consist only of two or three children. Does she realize that these parents may be forced by economic conditions (dare I suggest it?), by reasons of health or by other equally pressing circumstances of which she knows nothing?

To such couples there are open two courses. One is, of course, the "complete continence" to which your contributor refers. That this is the heroic way, no one denies. There is, however, another way, requiring, it is true, intelligent self-control and continence during certain periods of time. It seems to me that every Catholic husband and wife should unite in gratitude and renewed devotion to the Father through whose Divine Providence modern science has been able to produce another miracle. For miracle it most certainly is that, at the very time when external conditions are pressing most sharply upon family life, a way of determining the sterile and fertile periods in the menstrual cycle of the average woman has been presented to us.

So let me assure "Anonymous" that there are couples who lead a normal, if restricted, married life under the advice of their confessors and directed by a Catholic physician. Far from waiting for the "safe middle years" to return to the table of Our Lord," together, they seek there the courage and mutual consideration which will make their family life and home more truly Christian.

The comments of friends and relatives should have little concern for the couple who have reached a common understanding in their philosophy of life. One can hardly expect non-Catholic parents to have the same point of view as Catholics upon birth control and many other fundamental problems. As to Catholic parents—it has not been my experience to meet many with the attitude to which "Anonymous" refers but if such do exist there is good field for missionary work on the part of the young couples who face their problems intelligently and according to the dicta of Church and conscience.

ANOTHER CATHOLIC MOTHER.

Altoona, Pa.

TO the Editors: I am not a mother, nor do I hope to be one, but I salute the anonymous author of the "Plaint of a Catholic Mother" and I congratulate THE COMMONWEAL for its timely publication. That is the kind of article, plain, truthful, pressing, practical, and absolutely needed today that should be presented to readers of the Catholic press—and is not.

Her experience in the Catholic women's club is only too true and any observant, experienced priest will confirm what this anonymous Catholic mother writes. She knows what's going on and speaks out the plain, ugly truth. Will it be heard? It's the best sermon I have heard or read in a long time. God bless the preacher!

S. M. GORMAN.

Michael Williams is taking a short vacation, so that his column, VIEWS AND REVIEWS, which usually occupies this space, is suspended for two weeks.

The Screen

Comedy and Melodrama

THE APPEARANCE of a new Harold Lloyd picture should be an occasion for rejoicing among ardent film-goers. From the days of the early silent films, Harold's gags, nimble climbing and carefree meeting of trouble after trouble have always held their audiences and made this comedian a favorite. In "Professor, Beware" you discover the same enthusiastic Harold Lloyd (amazing, after all these years), the same wild, Mack Sennett chases, the same use of gags and the same good luck saving him from each catastrophe that were all part of every one of his pictures. However, "Professor, Beware" seems a little flat, a little emptier than usual. Maybe we are a little tired of Mr. Lloyd's particular brand of charm; maybe we prefer to consider his horn-rimmed glasses and silly cheerful air in retrospect. It remains to see now how the new generation take him to their hearts. Phyllis Welch is the girl who accompanies our hero in a wild chase across the country, and Lionel Stander and Sterling Holloway help the humor along in their own small but genuinely funny way; these two clever actors should be used more in the films.

In Walter Wanger's production, "Algiers," fine direction by John Cromwell, intelligent acting by Charles Boyer assisted by two beautiful foreign ladies, Hedy Lamarr (Austria) and Sigrid Gurie (Brooklyn), and a well-chosen supporting cast including Joseph Calleia, Gene Lockhart, Alan Hale and Johnny Downs, and an interesting story that has been adapted with sagacious economy of dialogue by John Howard Lawson and James Cain (for whom the postman always rings twice) make it an outstanding picture. Sought by the police, "Pepe Le Moko" seems perfectly happy with his friends and the lovely half-caste, Ines, in the colorful and dangerous Casbah section of Algiers until too great a desire for Paris and the French tourist, Gaby, lures him from his sanctuary to his doom. Here is adult entertainment, with the sad eyes and romantic face of Charles Boyer to fascinate the women, and both Miss Lamarr and Miss Gurie to keep the male audience absorbed. And for those who need more than a handsome face to make a picture a hit, there are some very exciting scenes, best of which is the one in which informer Lockhart gets his dues to the screaming accompaniment of a player piano.

"Love Finds Andy Hardy" is a touching and unpretentious little comedy that carries on in the films that series of stories about the Hardy family. If Mickey Rooney continues to improve with each picture as he has lately, there's no telling to what heights he'll rise. His understanding and sincere portrayal of the adolescent Andy make this picture good entertainment. The plot is slight and has to do with Andy's difficulties when he has two girls on his hands and he must take one to the Christmas dance. A subdued Judy Garland, as the little girl next door who helps Andy through his troubles, is at her best when she sings several new songs, "In-Between" and "Meet the Beat of My Heart." PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Books of the Day

Affirmative Christianity

Morals Makyth Man, by Gerald Vann, O.P. New York: Longmans, Green and Company. \$2.50.

ALTHOUGH this is the publication in book form of scattered essays which have appeared in English magazines, it is a unified and particularly well-balanced exposition of Thomistic ethics. Avoiding the attitude of a large number, "Can anything good come from outside the Church?", Father Vann shows that Thomism embraces whatever is good in other systems, synthesizing them in a complete and intellectually satisfying ethic. Thomism is based on free will, but allows for the fact that many actions are determined; it cannot accept hedonism as the exclusive principle of ethics, but admits that men need some pleasure; it steers a careful course between the total subordination of the individual to society and his entire freedom from any restraint placed upon him in the name of the common good; it is a system founded on law, but is not legalist.

Not only does Father Vann (following Saint Thomas) admit whatever is good in other systems, but he also acknowledges that at times certain elements of Thomism have been so emphasized by some Catholics as to throw them out of perspective. Thus "the 'moral systems' of the legalists whose whole effort was directed to precise delineation of the boundaries between what is allowed and what is forbidden" were too exclusively concerned with the negative effort of avoiding sin. Their work became largely a codification of prohibitions. "Christians," says Father Vann pithily, "have sometimes made negation their object; Christianity's aim is always affirmative."

On the other hand, he remarks, the "refusal to acknowledge that there can be anything to criticize in Catholic society—a refusal due, it would seem, to a sort of collective inferiority complex, fruit of the centuries of persecution and oppression—this refusal, as it is the cause of the hatred of Catholicism, as it is the cause also of secession from the Church ('The saints had for three centuries been calling in vain for the reform of the Church when the tempest of Lutheranism broke'), so also it is the greatest practical obstacle to the reunion of Christendom."

Would that one of Father Vann's epigrams, "Unity in essentials does not mean uniformity in accidentals," could be written on every Catholic heart. And his quotation from another Dominican, Father Stratmann, should be required reading for every Catholic writing on the Spanish war:

"Anyone who is acquainted with the spirit of both Catholic and non-Catholic cultivated and ignorant thought, knows how depressing it is when everything to do with the Church is apologized for and justified. We know what a relief it is when shadows are acknowledged to be shadows, stains to be stains, puzzles to be puzzles. How much better it is to acknowledge and bewail that Catholics in practical daily life, lay people, bishops, Popes, have, to a great extent, forgotten that the Church is the bearer of the Spirit and the Office of Christ, the Mother of all mankind, the Mystical Body of Christ, and that in the course of the world's history her members have fallen short and still fall short of her high calling. If this is acknowledged the Catholic ideal stands much higher and is much purer." J. ELLIOT ROSS.

DRAMA

Shakespearean Comedy, by H. B. Charlton. New York: The Macmillan Company. \$3.50.

THE PHILOSOPHY of tragedy has attracted a host of thinkers but the philosophy of comedy has won no comparable study. Professor Charlton presents this book as an attempt to apply to comedy the critical method of Aristotle, whose treatise on tragedy we have, but whose treatise on comedy is lost.

The age of Shakespeare was essentially and inescapably romantic, with love a thing of vital importance in life as the Elizabethans knew it, but with wooing represented on the stage according to the elaborately prescribed formalities of the age of chivalry. "Love's Labour's Lost" was mere gay trifling, but "The Two Gentlemen of Verona" was an endeavor, real but crude, to adapt the world of traditional romance and all its implications to the service of comedy. Shakespeare failed because the spirit of medieval romance shriveled in the presence of comedy; inadvertently he made romance comic. In disgust at his failure Shakespeare produced "The Taming of the Shrew" in which he burlesqued the ceremonies of romance's most ecstatic experience, the "mystery of wooing." But, like his age, Shakespeare was romantic and in "A Midsummer Night's Dream" he returned to the problem of discovering a mode by which the romantic temper of his time might find adequate satisfaction without abandoning the world-old human instinct for the comic. He made definite progress for, although fantastic and unreal, "A Midsummer Night's Dream" implied that men who discard cool reason for the frenzies of fancy and sentiment become the victims of the world and the butts of its comedy.

In Falstaff Shakespeare gave his genius free rein, but the mighty man of wiles and boasting failed at last to satisfy his creator's demand for a hero endowed with a sense of those forces in human life which enrich it immeasurably and which for Falstaff had been as if they were not. For such a hero Shakespeare casts about in the so-called "dark" comedies, "Measure for Measure," "Troilus and Cressida" and "All's Well that Ends Well," and in them dramatically advances toward the conviction that love and human charity are what make living worth while. But it is only in "Much Ado about Nothing," "Twelfth Night," and "As You Like It" that the process of Shakespeare's growth in the art of comedy reaches its consummation. Here man's instincts and intuitions, his emotions and his moods, his reason and his common sense have their legitimate place, and love justifies its primacy among the themes of Elizabethan comedy. Here "comedy is seeking in its own artistic way to elucidate the moral art of securing happiness by translating the stubbornness of fortune into a quiet and a sweet existence." To the eyes of Shakespeare, says Professor Charlton, "love is the one way to supreme happiness on this earth," not love which is the lust of Roman comedy but love which is the *caritas* of Saint Paul.

This is a stimulating and provocative study, closely woven, sound in scholarship, humble in its acceptance of earlier views, courageous in the pronouncement of its own, and complete in its knowledge of the history of comedy and in its mastery of the plays it discusses in intimate detail. It is unfortunate that such striking virtues should march to the accompaniment of so leaden-footed a style.

JOSEPH J. REILLY.

The History of Motion Pictures, by Maurice Bardèche and Robert Brasillach; translated and edited by Iris Barry. New York: W. W. Norton and Company, and The Museum of Modern Art. \$4.00.

WE ARE particularly fortunate in this country for having had Iris Barry translate and edit this history of the motion pictures. Her sane judgment and sound evaluations are exhibited many times, not only in the editorial postscript, which brings the history up to date, but also in the frequent footnotes which quickly correct the authors whenever they err in fact or in comment. Written in 1935 by two French authorities on the cinema, MM. Bardèche and Brasillach, this history of the seventh art stands as the best book in this field. Perhaps being written from the French point of view with additions by a reliable American critic, the book has more value for its continental flavor of balance than would a similar American work that might be liable to over-emphasize films made in the United States.

MM. Bardèche and Brasillach have organized their great collection of data well. They divide the history of motion pictures into six main periods and describe in each chapter the importance of the period and the developments in each producing country. "The Birth of the Film, 1895-1908," covers early experiments, the showing of the first film by the brothers Lumière, the work and troubles of Edison, the fantasies and tricks of Georges Méliès, who broke away from reportage and newsreels, "The Great Train Robbery," America's regard for this rich and entertaining industry. "The Pre-War Film, 1908-1914," discusses the rise of Pathé, the misdirected energies of the "art" films in France and Italy which were a hindrance to the true art of the cinema because of their use of the stage technique, actors and dramas, the birth of censorship in Chicago (which the authors call "Gangsterland"), "Quo Vadis" and "Cabiria," Max Linder, the Swedish films which first made the world realize that the art of the motion picture should be respected, the war in America between the Trust and the Independents, the move from the East to Los Angeles, Mack Sennett, development through pantomime and symbolism, the rise to third rank in importance in international trade.

"The Cinema during the World War" is mainly the story of the passing of supremacy in the field from Italy to Sweden to the United States with emphasis on such names as Judex, Maciste, Selma Lagerlof, Stiller, Seastrom, Mary Pickford, Griffith, Cecil B. De Mille, Thomas Ince, Bill Hart, Charlie Chaplin, and the many serial pictures. In "The Emergence of an Art, 1919-1923," stress is placed in the intellectuals' interest in the cinema, the predominance of French directors, the great work of the Swedes, the expressionist films of the Germans, the rise of Hollywood with its star system, scandals and Code of Morality, and the supreme genius of Charlie Chaplin. "The Classic Era of the Silent Film, 1923-1929," continues the authors' analyses of the best work of the leaders before the talkies were to change the technique entirely. René Clair, Pabst, Lang, DuPont, Eisenstein, Vertov, Pudovkin, Von Stroheim and again and again Chaplin receive homage. The authors grow sentimental about the end of this period, which is to them the death of an art. "The Talking Films, 1929-1935," covers the mistakes and triumphs of this field, in all countries, from "The Jazz Singer" to "La Maternelle."

Whether you agree with MM. Bardèche and Brasillach in all their comments on the thousands of films discussed in this history is of no great importance. They have done an outstanding service for the art in which they believe so firmly. It is unfortunate that they must come to the conclusion that the art of the film has so far been primarily an industry "and often the basest of them all." Their stress on the work of the directors rather than on that of the actors is healthy and bears out their own definition that "art is nature seen through a temperament." The French collaborators and Iris Barry close their long, excellent survey with summaries in which they express their hopes for the future progress of the films. With high aspirations, we might ask too, with one of those directors in the French Advance Guard of the '20s, who entitled his cinema experiment, "Of What Are the Young Films Dreaming?"

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

RELIGION

Von Hügel and Tyrrell, by M. D. Petre. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. \$1.85.

THIS is a cruel book. An English lady who admires the modernist Tyrrell has composed it in order to show us how living Tyrrell is, and she shows us how dead he is. She has invited a cadaver into the drawing-room, with an Anglican canon to keep smiling at it, and Von Hügel to converse with it, and the irony of the situation is terrible. It does not evoke pathos: we cannot weep. We freeze; we are not so used to death.

I will not say that the English lady should have done nothing of this kind. (The historians demand strange things.) But she should have been hostess in a different manner. She might have said, "Look, how well he answers though he is dead." Then we would have been touched. But what a mockery to treat him as living, to invite a corpse to go through its paces, and then to treat it as if it had! That is merciless.

Tyrrell is not living. Even the enemies of the Church do not rally round him. They have other leaders. He is too insignificant. He was made to seem significant only by a passing fashion. He who is living and significant is the Pope Pius X who condemned him, and by that act tried to save him. Buried in St. Peter's at Rome, Pius X occupies the papal tomb near to which of all the papal tombs, save that of Saint Peter, the modern pilgrims like most to pray. All pray there with humility and with request but most with gratitude. He is the man of the hour, the giant, the father of a renewed Christendom. He is what poor Tyrrell thought he himself was, or was to be.

Let us not be too hard on Tyrrell. There were better men who made some of his mistakes. A man with a real brain, though a somewhat clanking one, Von Hügel, his correspondent, was capable of falling into an intellectual smugness similar to his. Von Hügel spoke of Pius X condescendingly as "a peasant of simple seminary training, speaking to some two hundred million souls of whom doubtless, a good nine-tenths, at least, are even less cultured than himself. . . ." But Von Hügel did not have the overweening pride in his own self which ended by making Tyrrell in his own last days ghastly and ridiculous.

How terrible then for Tyrrell to have his pride pursue him after death! His English friend, Maude Petre, continues it for him. In 1938 she mocks him with it, holding him up in all his emptiness to the public view.

DANIEL SARGENT.

The Daughters of Dominic on Long Island, by Reverend Eugene J. Crawford. New York: Benziger Brothers. \$3.50.

AN EXHAUSTIVE historical study of the Dominicans can teaching Sisters of the diocese of Brooklyn. Father Crawford shows that twelve American communities of Dominican Sisters can trace their origin to the famous Dominican convent at Ratisbon, Germany—about 5,257 individuals—and of these, that 4,746 can trace their origin to Ratisbon through the American foundation made in Brooklyn in 1853. The present volume is equipped with copious notes and statistics and is the most complete work on the subject available.

Sister Mary John Berchmans, by Sister Mary Edwin O'Neill, R.H.N. New York: Benziger Brothers. \$1.75. THE BIOGRAPHY of a saintly member of the Sisters of the Holy Names in Oakland, California. The book consists mainly of notes from the subject's spiritual diary and reminiscences of friends and co-workers. Little attempt is made to present the life of Sister Mary John Berchmans in the usual chronological manner.

A Handmaid of the Holy Rosary, by Benedict Stolz, O.S.B. New York: Benziger Brothers. \$1.50.

A SIMPLY written account of the founding of an Arab Congregation of teaching Sisters by Mother Alphonsus of the Rosary (Sultane Marjam Rattas). This congregation is active in Palestine today, numbering 102 members whose work is teaching native Arab girls and the almost constant reciting of the holy rosary.

Juxta Crucem: Life of Basil Anthony Moreau, C.S.C., by Gerald M. C. Fitzgerald, C.S.C. New York: P. J. Kenedy and Sons. \$3.50.

A TREATMENT of the origin and growth of the Congregation of the Holy Cross at Notre Dame, Indiana. It includes a definitive biography of the founder of this famous religious family presented by Father Fitzgerald, C.S.C., known for his "Letters of Father Page." The book is well documented and equipped with illustrations of notable pioneers of the Holy Cross Congregation, including the celebrated Brother André of St. Joseph's Oratory, Montreal.

The Life of Father Francis Jordan, Founder of the Society of the Divine Saviour; translated from the German by Winfrid Herbst, S.D.S. St. Nazianz, Wis.: The Society of the Divine Saviour. \$1.45, postpaid.

THIS story of the founder of the Society of the Divine Saviour would make easier reading if it had been presented in a more attractive format. As it is, the present five hundred odd pages resemble an old-fashioned textbook and it would be a hardy reader who would dare them all.

Hidden Apostles: Our Lay Brother Missionaries, by Pierre Duchaussois, O.M.I. Buffalo, N. Y.: Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate. \$1.50.

AN OUTLINE of the varied life of an Oblate lay Brother, particularly in the two vicariates apostolic of Athabaska and Mackenzie in Northwestern Canada. Numerous photographs attest the hardships of these heroic apostles in the frozen North.

MARY FABYAN WINDEATT.

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Revolutionary Religion: Christianity, Fascism, and Communism, by Roger Lloyd. New York: Harper and Brothers. \$2.00.

FASCISM, Communism and Christianity are the three great revolutionary religious forces in the world today. That is the contention of Canon Lloyd—it is also the contention of many others, including Monsignor John A. Ryan. Fascism (including Nazism) and Communism are religions—they fulfil all the necessary conditions: something to worship (in their case the State), and a plan for the betterment of human existence (exalting Materialism with them). Over against these is Christianity, in many ways the most revolutionary of all, based as it is on Love.

Canon Lloyd holds Communism the more formidable foe, because of its avowed international character, whereas Fascism generally exalts nationalism or race. But his belief that Christianity offers "the more excellent way" for the same reason plus its fundamental recognition of the existence of God is hampered in its development by the very fact that he continues to belong to one of the most national of churches, and that he holds it to be "a debatable point" whether Christ did found a universal, supra-national Church. How is the message ever to reach all men, if each nation has its own brand? Pope Pius XI has given the same line of argument better than is presented in this, in many ways, excellent treatise, just because he knows that Christ did leave such a dynamic, revolutionary religion.

FLOYD KEELER.

Our Lady of Sorrows, by Charles Journet. New York: Sheed and Ward. \$1.00.

THE ONLY thing to do when given a treasure such as Journet's "Our Lady of Sorrows" is to welcome it and say, "Thank you"—both to the author and the translator-publisher.

The introduction begins: "Let us think on the love that was between Jesus and His Mother." Then Journet takes each of the seven incidents, under which all Our Lady's sorrows are gathered, and with great simplicity leads us to look upon the growth of pure love. For in the love of the Virgin we meet that question which, even though unacknowledged, is at the back of every human mind: Why must that which is good be mortified? The answer comes: "It was of necessity that something in itself lawful, something incomparably pure and holy and delicate should be thus eternally broken. The Virgin's sacrifice could never be the renunciation of sin, for she had no sin; it could only be the renunciation of things holy for the sake of things holier. . . . More fully than any who should come after her she was to enter into the Kingdom of God, the Kingdom of spiritual relationships." As the simplicity of the book itself comes from the clear gaze of love, the depth of truth contained in this small volume will only be fathomed after long use.

SISTER MARY OF THE COMPASSION.

SCIENCE

Isaac Newton, 1642-1727, by J. W. N. Sullivan; with a *Memoir of the author* by Charles Singer. New York: The Macmillan Company. \$2.50.

FOUR years after Galileo's "Discorsi" appeared, Isaac Newton was born in the small manor house in Woolsthorpe, Lincolnshire. Galileo had first shown that Aristotle's principles of mechanics, which were abstracted from every-day observation, disagreed with observation when applied to systematic experiment. It was Newton,

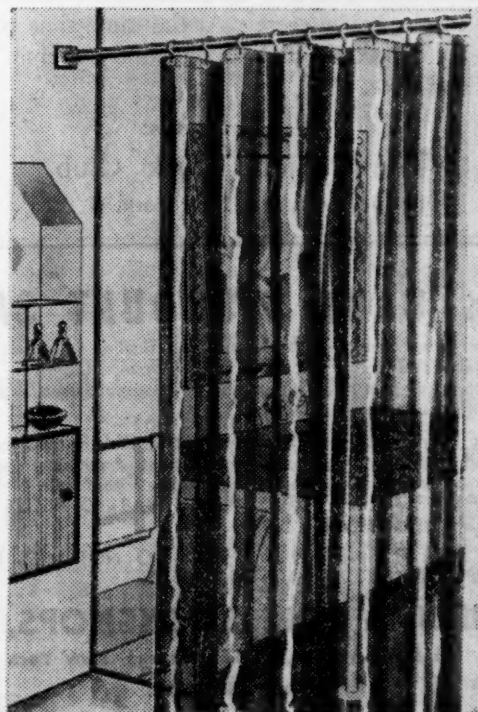
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THIS Review aims at carrying out the wishes of the Holy Father, expressed in his letter *Rerum Orientalium*, of helping Catholics in the West to understand the Christian Tradition of the East, both with a view to a fuller knowledge of their own Catholic heritage, and as the best way to prepare for the Reunion of the dissident Eastern Churches.

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however, who brought the new mechanics into a form in which it was to remain the basis of physics for more than two hundred years, until enormously improved methods of observation at the beginning of the twentieth century showed Newton's laws also to be only approximations.

Dynamics (that is the field we are discussing) shows its most spectacular applications in engineering and astronomy. The former was still so primitive that friction, whose action had deceived Aristotle, played still the dominant rôle. Newton brought Galileo's ideas into precise quantitative form, applied a mathematical method newly invented by himself (the calculus, now the indispensable tool of physical science and engineering) to it and by his law of gravitation succeeded in explaining Kepler's empirical laws of the motion of the planets.

Not only mechanics but also optics was completely reformed by Newton through his discovery of the spectrum of colors into which white light is separated by a glass prism. Surely many people before Newton had played with such glass prisms, but Newton's genius showed in the selection of those experimental conditions which gave the crucial results and in the clarity of the conclusions he drew from them in the face of entrenched contrary opinions. This discovery not only proved colored light, not white light, as the fundamental phenomenon, but spectral analysis has become now the most important clue to the structure of matter and a powerful tool in astronomy as well as industrial chemical analysis.

The present book is mainly concerned with the personality who made these fundamental discoveries, himself often a puzzle. Nothing in his ancestry foreshadowed his genius. His father, a weakling and drunkard, died early. His mother, to whom he was deeply attached, chose for her second husband a clergyman. Newton's family was, however, well off, and he went to a good school and then to Cambridge. His first great discovery was made when he was twenty-four. At twenty-seven he was a professor at Cambridge. His main characteristics seem to have been his conscious intensity of work, deepness of concentration and the clarity that resulted therefrom. When he worked he forgot to eat and sleep. Human contacts, so important to Americans, meant nothing to him, he wanted to be left alone and got angry when smaller minds, concerned with personal matters, disturbed him. While his great achievements lie in physics and mathematics he devoted only short periods of his life to these fields. Much time was consumed with chemical, or rather alchemical, experiments, which did not lead to known results. Of the greatest importance to him, however, were his theological investigations, chronology of the Old Testament, exegesis and criticism of the text, in which he tried to argue for Unitarianism. He was strongly anti-Catholic. In later life he took public office. As Warden and Master of the Mint he directed successfully the recoinage of England. He died at eighty-five.

The present book is a posthumous work of the well-known writer, J. W. N. Sullivan. It is interestingly written, gives a vivid picture of its subject, but suffers somewhat from repetitions, which a last revision by the author would probably have avoided.

KARL F. HERZFELD.

The Evolution of Physics, by Albert Einstein and Leopold Infeld, reviewed in our issue of July 8, was erroneously attributed to The Macmillan Company. The book is published by Simon and Schuster.—The Editors.

The Inner Forum

DETAILED plans for the 1938 Annual World Congress of university Catholic federations have recently been circulated. The congress this year will meet from August 20 to August 24 at a mountain hotel near Ljubljana, Yugoslavia, for a study session devoted to the theme, "The Catholic Student in the Face of the Communist Problem." On August 24 the congress moves to Bled, where it continues through the 28th; the final day, the 29th, will be spent in Zagreb. The whole undertaking is being organized by Pax Romana, International Secretariat of University Catholic Student and Alumni Federations, which has an American Committee at 30 West 60th Street, New York, N. Y. Because of the very reasonable charges at the Congress it is actually possible for Americans wishing to attend to do so at a total expense of around \$200; anyone interested should apply to the American Committee, stating with what federation, if any, the applicant is connected, as well as the college or university concerned.

The ten days of this year's Congress are devoted in part to study sessions and in part to general meetings on the theme. The whole ten days will have a liturgical setting in the form of daily Mass. There will be sub-secretariat meetings on the Press, Social Action, the Missions, the Eastern Rites; there will be a documentary session on the results of the survey on Catholic students in the face of the Communist problem as well as a similar session, illustrated with motion pictures, on the Christian-Social movement and Jocism.

Last year in Paris the International Assembly of Pax Romana tentatively accepted the invitation of America to hold the 1939 world congress in the United States. This invitation will be definitively acted on at the Yugoslavian congress this summer. In view of the world's fairs in New York and San Francisco, next year seems to offer a particularly favorable opportunity to extend to European members of Pax Romana an invitation to visit our country.

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